

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SPC-03 AID-20 EB-11 NSC-10 RSC-01

CIEP-02 TRSE-00 SS-20 STR-08 OMB-01 CEA-02 IGA-02

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01

EUR-25 AGR-20 INT-08 DRC-01 COME-00 /185 W

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R 132058Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6469

INFO AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BRIDGETOWN 1710

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN PFOR

SUBJ: PUERTO RICO EYES CDB MEMBERSHIP

1. TWO PUERTO RICAN GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES CALLED ON AMBASSADOR TODAY TO EXPRESS PR'S STRONG INTEREST IN JOINING CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT BANK AND PLAYING MORE ACTIVE REGIONAL ROLE WITH FELLOW CARIBBEAN STATES. SAID THEY HAD APPOINTMENT TO SEE ASSISTANT SECRETARY KUBISCH AND DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARIES SHLAUDEMAN AND BOWDLER ON DECEMBER 18 TO DISCUSS LEGAL, PROCEDURAL AND POLITICAL ASPECTS OF PR'S CDB MEMBERSHIP.

2. SANTIAGO ORTIZ, PR'S DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL MATTERS AND DIRECTOR OF PR'S NORTH-SOUTH CENTER, ACCOMPANIED BY JOHN H. MUDIE, VICE PRESIDENT OF GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT BANK OF PR, IN REPLY TO AMB'S QUERY AS TO WHAT (IN ADDITION TO HELPING CARIBBEAN, OF COURSE) PR HOPED TO GAIN BY JOINING CDB, SAID THAT PR WANTS CDB MEMBERSHIP (A) TO DEVELOP PR'S "CARIBBEAN PERSONALITY," TO GAIN WIDER ACCEPTANCE BY OTHER CARIBBEAN STATES, AND TO REFUTE

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"COLONY" CHARGES SOMETIMES LEVELLED AT PR BY SOME LEFTIST GOVERNMENTS AND (B) TO REAP TANGIBLE ECONOMIC BENEFITS FROM

CLOSER ASSOCIATION WITH CARIBBEAN NEIGHBORS. SPECIFICALLY, PAIR CITED POSSIBILITY OF BETTER ACCESS TO UK, EEC MARKETS THROUGH MULTI-TERRITORY ASSEMBLY OPERATIONS INVOLVING PR AND INCREASED AVAILABILITY TO PR OF REGIONAL RESOURCES (E.G. FINE WOOD AND LUMBER). BOTH ALSO FELT THAT CLOSER RELATIONSHIPS WITH CARIBBEAN NEIGHBORS MIGHT BETTER ENABLE PR TO FORESTALL LOSS OF INDUSTRY BY PR TO CHEAPER LABOR MARKETS AVAILABLE ELSEWHERE IN REGION.

3. IN REPLY TO QUERY AS TO MAGNITUDE OF ASSISTANCE PR WOULD BE PREPARED TO SUPPLY, OFFICIALS STATED THAT SINCE THEY WOULD LIKE TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR "DIRECTORSHIP" IN CDB, WOULD THINK IN TERMS OF CONTRIBUTION GREATER THAN COLOMBIA OR VENEZUELA, I.E. PROBABLY IN NEIGHBORHOOD OF DOLS 4.5 MILLION AS WELL AS SMALLER DONATION TO CDB SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT FUND.

4. PR REPS. MENTIONED RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH GEORGE HIGH OF ARA/CAR IN PR AS WELL AS YESTERDAY'S MEETING WITH ACTING CDB PRESIDENT ROY JONES AND OTHER BANK OFFICIALS. SOMEWHAT AS AFTERTHOUGHT, SAID THEY HAD ALSO CALLED ON C.B. WILLIAMS, GOB PERMSEC, MINEXTAFF.

5. BOTH MEN ASKED ABOUT COMPREHENSIVE DATA ON REGION AND MUDIE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN BARALL REPORT COMPLETED SOME FIVE YEARS AGO. WE SUPPLIED THEM WITH SOME INFORMATION ON BARBADOS AND INFORMED THEM THAT, TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, BARALL REPORT REMAINED CLASSIFIED.

6. COMMENT: BOTH MEN FRANKLY DESCRIBED DOMESTIC POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF PR HAVING SOME AUTHORITY OUTSIDE U.S. AND WERE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT ADVANTAGES OF CDB MEMBERSHIP FOR PR. WHEN AMB. REFERRED BRIEFLY TO PREVIOUS HISTORY IN WHICH CONSTITUTIONAL-LEGAL SITUATION OF PR HAD APPEARED TO PROHIBIT ACTUAL CDB MEMBERSHIP BY COMMONWEALTH OF PR WHILE USG NOT MEMBER, OFFICIALS SEEMED BULLISH ABOUT CHANCES THAT PREVIOUS OBSTACLES COULD BE OVERCOME. WE FEEL THAT PR MOVES TOWARD CLOSER RELATIONS WITH CARIBBEAN NEIGHBORS IS WELCOME DEVELOPMENT WORTH ENCOURAGING AND TOLD THEM SO BUT ACTUAL MEMBERSHIP IN CDB AS LONG AS USG REMAINS OUTSIDE SURELY POSES PROBLEMS TO BE HANDLED WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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CARE. VISIT OF PAIR TO GOB EXTAF F PERMSEC UNDERTAKEN WITHOUT OUR KNOWLEDGE, - WE WOULD HAVE BEEN PLEASED TO INTRODUCE THEM AS AMERICAN OFFICIALS. ORTIZ CLAIMS TO BE OLD FRIEND OF ASSISTANT SECRETARIES BOWDLER, SHLAUDEMAN AND AMBASSADOR JOVA. DONOVAN

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